

Lord Percy was raised to the earldom of Northumberland.¹ From a purely selfish point of view, Percy had played his game well during the last year. He had forced politicians at Westminster to recognise his importance, and he this day realised a great part of his ambition. His brief alliance with John of Gaunt seems to have come to an end at this point or soon after. Except when his interest pointed in that direction, he felt no more loyalty to the Duke than he did to the Commons, and the Lancastrian alliance was ceasing to be a profitable investment.

These promotions were the last act of concession that the King and his advisers found it necessary to make to the Duke's party for some time to come. As the boy was now firm on the throne, it was safe to dispense with his uncle's assistance. Four days after his coronation, a Council was chosen from which John of Gaunt and the new Earls of Buckingham and Northumberland were excluded. Two of their supporters, Lord Latimer and the Bishop of Salisbury, were put on as a concession ; but, judging from the actions of the government, the real power on the Council must have lain with the Earl of March and Bishop Courtenay, backed by the influence of the King's mother over her son. The Duke, finding the position untenable, retired into private life at Kenilworth, leaving his rivals to learn by time and experience how hard it was to defend the country against the enemy, if his powerful assistance was alienated. Before he left London he told the King that in case of need he could bring into the field a greater army than any other lord in the kingdom ; but he was careful to withhold all help till he could get his own terms. At present the government had no need of his services, and felt no fear of his displeasure. A humiliation was inflicted on him which showed that the late policy of heaping gifts on the House of Lancaster had come to an end. The castle of Hertford, which he had been fortifying and enlarging with a view, it is said, to making it his principal residence, was resumed by the new King, much to the delight of the monks of the neighbourhood, who were